A SERMON

Preached by

Mr Edmund Calamy

AT

Aldermanbury London, Aug. 24. 1651.

BEING

A Funeral Sermon for Mr. *Love* on the Sabbath-Day following after he was executed.

Containing these particulars:

1 The Person that fell asleep.
2 The Speech that he made, when he fell asleep.
3 What he did when he had finished his Speech.

ALSO,

Four excellent Doctrines, and Propositions, to the Presbyterians, and others; to be by them practised and meditated upon both Morning and Evening.

JOHN 11. 11.

Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth.*

PSAL. 116. 15.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.

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A

SERMON

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M. Edmund Calamy

Mr. LOVES FUNERAL SERMON.

ACT. 7. 60. the latter part.

And when he had ſaid this, he fell aſleep.

THeſe words contain in them the happy cloſure and upſhot of *Stephens* life, wherein we have 3 particulars. 1. The perſon that fell aſleep. 2. The Speech that he made, when he fell aſleep. 3. What he did when he had finiſhed his Speech.

1. We have the perſon that fell aſleep, and that was *Stephen*: He was a man full of faith, and full of the Holy Ghoſt, as you may ſee, *Act.* 6. 5. He was the firſt Martyr that ever ſuffered for the cauſe of Chriſt; hence I might gather this Doctrine, *viz.*

Obſ. *That the beſt of men are ſubject to violent and unnatural deaths.* *Stephen* that was full of the holy Ghoſt, was ſtoned to death, and *John* the Baptiſt that was full of the holy Ghoſt from the very womb, was beheaded; *Peter* was crucified, and ſo was *Andrew*; *Iſaiah* was ſawed a ſunder, *Jeremiah* was ſtoned, and *Zacharias* was ſlain between the Temple and the Altar. But I ſhall paſſe this.

The ſecond part of the Text, is the Speech that *Stephen* made when he fell aſleep, *Hoc dicto obdormivit*, that is, when he had finiſhed his prayer, *He fell aſleep.* Hence obſerve,

Obſ. *That it is an excellent way to cloſe up our lives with prayer.* To die praying is a moſt chriſtian way of dying. *They ſtoned Stephen calling upon God.* After this manner Chriſt dyed, he prayed, *Father into thy hands I commend my ſpirit, and having thus ſaid, he gave up the Ghoſt.* This he did that it might be a patern to all Chriſtians. Prayer is a neceſſary duty at all times, but eſpecially when we are a dying, and that for theſe three reaſons.

1. Becauſe when we are to die, we have moſt need of Gods help, for then the Devil is moſt buſie, and we moſt weak.

2. Becauſe when we are to die, we are to beg the greateſt boon of God, that is, that he would receive us into his heavenly Kingdom. Now prayer is the chief meanes to obtain this mercy, for it is *Porta Cæli, Clavis Paradiſi*, the Gate of Heaven, a Key to let us in Paradiſe. Therefore we have great reaſon to die praying.

3. Becauſe when a Saint of God is dying, he is then to take his laſt farewel of prayer. In Heaven there is no praying, but all thankſgiving; there is no need in Heaven, therefore no prayer in Heaven. Now a Saint of God, being to take his leave of prayer, when he is to die, therefore it is fit he ſhould die praying. I beſeech you remember this pattern in the Text, St. *Stephen* died calling upon the Lord. Let us die praying, as that Emperor ſaid, *Oportet Imperatorem ſtantem mori*; ſo may I ſay, *Oportet Chriſtianum mori præcantem*, it behoves a Chriſtian to die praying.

Queſt. But what was the ſubſtance of *Stephens* prayer?

Anſw. He prayed for himſelf, and he prayed for his perſecutors.

1. He prayed for himſelf, *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*, ver. 59. 2. He prayed for his perſecutors, *Lord lay not this ſin to their charge*, ver. 60. I will not enter upon this part of the Text, for it would ſwallow up all my time. Therefore I ſhall wave it, and come to the third part, which is that, that (by Gods aſſiſtance) I purpoſe to ſpeak unto, *viz.* What *Stephen* did, when he had finiſhed his prayer, *When he had this ſaid, he fell aſleep*, that is, he died.

Behold here the magnanimity, the piety, and the Chriſtian courage of Stephen. The people were ſtoning of him, and gnaſhing their teeth upon him; and the good man dies with as much quietneſs of mind, as if he had died in his bed, *He fell aſleep*, while they were ſtoning him. While he died he prayed, and while he prayed he died.

But what made *Stephen* die thus quietly? Read the 55 verſe, and you ſhall ſee the reaſon of it. Being full of the holy Ghoſt, he looked up ſtedfaſtly into Heaven, and ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God. Behold (ſaith he) I ſee the Heavens opened, and the Son of man ſtanding at the right hand of God, ready to receive his ſoul, and that made him die with ſuch an extraordinary quietneſs of mind:

Death in Scripture, especially the death of Gods Children, is often compared to a sleep. It is said of *David*, That *he slept with his fathers*. And it is said, 1 *Thes.* 4. 13, *I would not have you ignorant concerning them which are asleep*, that is, concerning them which are dead. And 1 *Cor.* 11. 30. *For this cause many are weakly and sick among you, and many sleep*, that is, many die. This expression is a metaphoricall expression, and will afford us many rare and precious instructions about death. And therefore (the grace of God assisting me) I desire to spend the rest of the time in the opening of this metaphor.

The Observation is this. *viz. That when a child of God dies, though his death be never so unnatural and violent, yet it is nothing else but a falling asleep*: Or, The death of a child of God, though stoned to death, though burnt to ashes, though it be never so violent and unnatural, is nothing else but a falling asleep, *When he had said this, he fell asleep.*

Somnus est mortis imago, Sleep is the image of death. There are many notable resemblances betwixt sleep and death, some of which I shall speak unto at this time.

1. Sleep is common to all men; there is no man can live without sleep. So it is true of death, Death is common to all, it is *appointed for all men once to die*: And therefore *David* said, He was to go the way of all flesh; *Statutum est omnibus semel mori, Omnibus est calcanda semel Lethæa*, All men must sleep the sleep of death, or else be changed, which is a metaphoricall death.

2. As sleep ariseth from the vapours that ascend from the stomack to the head, and tie the senses, and hinder their opperations; so death came into the world by *Adam* s eating the forbidden fruit, and by the poisonfull vapour of sin, that brought death upon him and all his posterity. *By one man sinne entred into the world, and death by sinne, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*, Rom. 5. 12. Had *Adam* never sinned, *Adam* should never have died: But *in illo die*, said God, *In that day thou eatest the forbidden fruit thou shalt die the death*, Sinne brings *omnimodam mortem*, all kindes of death; it brings death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal. Now because all men are poisoned with the poison of sine, therefore all men must sleep the sleep of death; It is sin that hath poisoned all mankind.

3. As a man when he goeth to sleep puts off his clothes, and goeth naked into bed: So it is with us when we come to die; *we came naked into the world, and we must go naked out of the world*; As we brought nothing with us into the world, so we must carry nothing with us out of the world; And therefore death in Scripture is called nothing else, but an *uncloathing* of our selves, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. Death to a child of God, is nothing else, but the putting off his cloaths. The body of man is *animæ ἔνδυμα & vestimentum*, It is the souls cloathing; and death is nothing else but the uncloathing of the soul; it is just like a man going to bed, and putting off his cloths; St. *Peter* cals it, The *putting off our earthly tabernacle*, 2 pet. 1. 14. Our bodies are the souls tabernacle, and death is the putting off of this tabernacle.

Beloved, when we come to die, we shall be stript naked of three things,

1. We shall be stript naked of all our worldly honour, riches and greatnesse.
2. We shall be stript naked of our bodies. And
3. Which is above all, we shall be stript naked of our sins. And that is the happines of a child of God, he shall put off, not only his mortal body, but the body of sin.

4. In the fourth place observe, As no man knoweth the time when he fals asleep, a man fals asleep before he is aware: So no man can tell the certain time when he must die. There is nothing so certain as that we must die, nothing so uncertain as the time when we shall die; Death comes suddenly, even as sleep comes upon a man before he is aware.

5. Observe, As Children and infants, because they do not know the benefit of sleep, are very loth to go to sleep, many times the mother is fain to whip the childe to bed; even so it is with most of Gods people, because they do not study the benefit of death, That death puts an end to all our miseries and sins, and opens a door to let us in unto everlasting happines, and that we shall never see God or Christ before we die; I say, because Gods people do not study the benefit of death, therefore they are like to little children, loth to die, loth to go to bed. And therefore death is called *The King of terrors*. Death is terrible to many of Gods children, because they are but infants in grace, and because they do not know the benefit of death.

6. Observe, As when a man is fast asleep, he is free from cares, and troubles; Let it thunder (as it thundred not long since, as you know) yet a man that is fast asleep, while he is asleep he hears it not; Let the house be on fire, while the man is asleep, he sees it not, neither is he troubled at it. So it is with the death of Gods children, when Gods children sleep the sleep of death, they are free from the thunder of this world, they are free from all troubles, from all cares, they go to their graves as to their beds, and rest in quietnes, and are not sensible of any troubles that are in the world. When a child of God sleeps the sleep of death, he doth not feel, nor is he sensible of any of the calamities or sad providences of God upon the earth.

7. When a man goeth to sleep, he goeth to sleep but for a certain time, in the morning he awakes out of sleep. So it is with the sleep of death; and therefore death is called a sleep, because we must all awake in the morning of the resurrection. We are in the grave, as in our beds and when the trumpet of God, and the voice of the Archangel shall sound, we shall all rise out of our grave, as out of our beds. Death is but a sleep for a certain time.

8. Sleep is a great refreshing to those that are weary and sick, and when the sick man awakes, he is more lively and chearful then he was when he fell asleep; and therefore sleep is called *Medicus laborum, reditæ gratio virium, recreator corporum*. The great Physician of the sick body, the redintegration of mans spirits, the reviver of the weary body. And so it is with death, when Gods people awake out of the sleep of death, they shall be made active for God, then ever they were before; when you lie down in the grave, you lie down with mortal bodies; *It it sown a mortal body, but it shall rise up an immortal body, it is sown in dishonour, but it shall rise up in honour; it is sown a natural body, but it shall rise up a spiritual body.*

9. As in the morning when we arise out of our beds, we then put on our Cloathes. So in the morning of the resurrection, we shall put on a a glorious body, like to the glorious body of Jesus Christ, we shall put on *Stolam immortalitatis*, the garment of immortality.

10. As no man when he layeth him down to sleep, knoweth the direct time when he shall awake. So no man can tell when the resurrection shall be. They do but couzen you, who say, that the general resurrection shall be such or such a year; for, as no man can know the minute when he shall awake out of his natural sleep, no more can any man know when we shall arise from the sleep of death.

11. It is a very easie thing to awake a man out of sleep, it is but jogging of him and you will quickly awake him.

12 As when a man ariseth in the morning, though he hath slept many hours; may, suppose he could sleep 20 years together, yet notwithstanding, when he awakes, these 20 years will seem to be but as one hour unto him. So it will be at the day of Judgment, all those that are in their graves, when they awake, it will be *tanquam somnus unius horæ*, but as the sleep of an hour unto them.

Lastly, and most especially, As sleep seizeth onely upon the body, and the outward senses, but doth not seiz upon the soul, the soul of man is many times most busie, when the man is asleep; And God hath heretofore revealed most glorious things to his children in dreams, when they have bin asleep; God appeared unto *Abraham* and many others in dreams, the body sleeps, but the soul awakes. So it is with the sleep of death, the body, that dies, but the soul doth not die. There are some men that are not afraid to teach you, That the soul sleeps as well as the body, and that when the body dies and fals asleep, the soul likewise continues in a dull Lethorgy *veterno & somno correptus*, neither capable of joy nor sorrow, untill the resurrection. Beloved, This is a very uncomfortable, and a very false Doctrine. They indeavour to prove it from my Text, they say, That *Stephen* when he died fell asleep. It is true in regard of his body, he fell asleep, but his soul did not fall asleep, that which was upon itself asleep which was his body onely; for when he was stoning, he saw Jesus Christ standing ready to receive his soul into heaven; Lord Jesus, saith he, *receive my Spirit*. Stephens soul could not be stoned, though his body was stoned. So when Jesus Christ was crucified, his soul was not crucified, I mean, when his body was killed, his soul was not killed: indeed he did endure torments in his soul, which made him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* But yet his soul did not die. So when Stephen died, his soul went to Christ. It is true, when a child of God dies, the soul goes to sleep; How is that? The soul goes to sleep in a Scripture-sense, that is, it goes to rest in Abrahams bosom (O blessed sleep) it goes to rest in the imbraces of God, it goes into the arms of its Redeemer. It goes to the heavenly Paradise, it goes to be always with the Lord. But take heed of that wicked opinion, to say that the soul sleeps in an Anabaptistical sense; that is, That it lies in a strange kind of Lethargy, neither dead, nor alive; neither capable of joy nor sorrow, untill the resurrection. Though Stephens body fell asleep, yet his soul did not fall asleep, but immediately went unto Jesus Christ in Heaven. Thus I have given the Explication of the words. Now give me leave to make some Application of all unto our selves.

Use 1. If the death of Gods children be nothing else but a falling asleep, then let this comfort us against the deaths of our godly friends, though they die unnatural and violent deaths, though they be stoned to death, though they be burnt, drowned, though they be sawn asunder, &c. Here is a medicine of rich consolation, which as a Minister of Christ I hold out unto you this day, viz. That the death of a child of God, let it be after what manner soever it will, it is nothing else but a falling asleep: he goes to his grave as to his bed; and therefore our burying places are called *Kometeria, dormitoria*, our sleeping-houses. A child of God when he lies he lies down in peace, and enters into his rest. And as

a man, when he is asleep, is free from all the cares and troubles he hath in the day time; So the people of God, when they are fallen asleep, they are free from all the miseries and calamities, crosses, losses and afflictions that we are troubled withall; Therefore give me leave to say to you, as Christ did to the women that followed him to the Cross, bewailing and lamenting of him, *O daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and for your children.* So say I, O weep not for those that are dead in the Lord, that are fallen asleep in Jesus Christ, they are at their rests, they do not know the troubles that we are troubled withall, Abraham remembers us not; They are not sensible of our miseries and afflictions, let us weep for our selves, and for the miseries that are coming upon us; and let us know, that when Gods children die, they do but lie in their beds untill the morning of the resurrection, and then they shall put on *stolam immortalitatis*, the garment of immortality, and their bodies shall be made like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ. And know one thing more, which is all in all, viz. That when the body of a child of God falls asleep, his soul immediatly goes into the arms of Christ, and there lives for ever in the imbraces of Jesus Christ; though the body falls asleep, yet the soul is received into Abrahams bosom. I beseech you comfort one another with these words.

Vse 2. Let me beseech the people of God that they would look upon death, not as it is presented unto us in Nature's Looking-glass, but as it is set down in a Scripture-dress. Nature presents death in a very terrible manner; and it is true, death is very terrible to a man out of Christ; but to you that are in Christ, the sting of death is taken away, death is nothing else but a quiet and placid sleep, putting off our clothes, and a going to bed till we awake in the morning of the resurrection. Death to a child of God is nothing else but a putting off his earthly tabernacle. A going from an earthly prison into an heavenly palace, a hoising up sail for Heaven. The letting of the soul out of prison, as a bird out of the cage, that it may flee to heaven: A change from a temporary hell to an eternal heaven. A going out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, and therefore called *exodus* 2 *Pet.* 1. 15. is not *mors hominis*, but *mors peccati*, not the death of the man, but the death of his sins. It is *Sepultura vitiorum*: It is the pilgrims journeys end, the sea-mans haven; an absence from the body, and a presence with the Lord. Let all Gods people look upon death through Scripture spectacles, and consider it as it is sweetly represented in this Text! Remember blessed *Stephen* stoned to death, and yet falling asleep. And remember also that excellent saying of *Austin*, *That a child of God should be as willing to die as to put off his cloaths, because death is nothing else to him but a sleep, and a departure from misery to everlasting happiness.*

Vse 3. To beseech you all every night when ye go to bed, to remember this text, and especially to remember these four things.

First, When you are putting off your cloaths, remember that you must shortly put off your bodies. And

Secondly, When you go into your beds, remember that it will not be long before you must go down into your graves. And

Thirdly, When you close your eyes to sleep, remember that it will not be long before death must close your eyes. And

Fourthly, When you awake in the morning, remember that at the resurrection you must all arise out of the grave, and that the just shal arise to everlasting happiness, but the wicked to everlasting misery.

It is a saying of an Heathen man, That the whole life of a man should be nothing else but *Meditatio mortis*, but a meditation of death. And it is the saying of *Moses*, Deut. 32. 29. *O that men were wise that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.* Beloved, it is the greatest part of wisdom every day to remember our latter end; That man is the onely wise man, and happy man in life and death, that is ever mindful of his death.

Quest.

Quest. But before I make an end, I must answer one Question, *viz. Whether the death of the wicked be not in Scripture compared to a sleep, as well as the death of the godly?*

Answ. I answer, That wicked men in Scripture are said to fall asleep when they die. It is said of idolatrous *Ieroboam*, That he *slept with his Fathers*. Of *Baasha* and *Omri*, those wicked Kings, That they *slept with their Fathers*.

Quest. But then the Question will be, *In what respect is the death of the wicked compared to a sleep?*

Answ. Even as a man which is asleep, sometimes hath no benefit, rest, or ease thereby; when the sick man awakes he is many times more sick then he was before he went to sleep: Some men are much disquieted in their sleeps by hideous and fearful dreams; *Nebuchadnezzar* when he was asleep, had a most scaring dream, and when he awoke, he was amazed therewith. So it is with a wicked man; Death to a wicked man is a sleep, but it is a terrifying sleep, the soul that goes immediatly to hell, where it is burned with fire that never shall be quenched, and where the worm that never dies is always gnawing upon it. The body that indeed lies in the grave asleep, but how? even as a malefactor that sleeps in prison the night before he is executed, but when he awakes he is hurried and dragged to execution: so the wicked man fals asleep in death; but when he awakes he awakes to everlasting damnation. But now a child of God, when he sleeps the sleep of death, he sleeps in his Fathers houses; and when he awakes, he awakes to everlasting happiness.

Vse 4. And this makes way for the fourth and last Use, which is a Use of very great consequence. And it is to beseech you all, that you would labour so to live, that when you fall asleep, you may sleep an happy sleep. There is the sleep that the wicked man sleeps when he dies, and there is the sleep that the godly man sleeps when he dies. Now I beseech you, labour so to live, that when you fall asleep, your sleep may be an happy sleep unto you, that when you awake in the morning of the resurrection, it may be an awakening unto you.

Quest. But then the great question will be, How shall I do this?

I shall give you four or five helps for this.

1. If you would sleep an happy sleep at death, then you must labour to sleep in Jesus Christ. It is said, 1 *Cor.* 15. 18. *Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ.* And 1 Thes. 4. 14. *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* What is it to sleep in Jesus? To sleep in Jesus is to die in the faith of Jesus Christ.

2. To sleep in Jesus, is to die with an interest in Jesus Christ, to die as a member of Christ united to him as our head. For you must know, that the dust of a Saint is part of that man who is a member of Jesus Christ, and every believer when he sleeps in the dust, he sleeps in Jesus Christ, that is, he lies in the grave and his dust is part of Christ mistical, and Christ as an head will raise it up, and cannot be compleat without it. Now then, if ever you would sleep an happy sleep, labor to get a real interest in Christ, labour to live in Christ while you live. And then when you fall asleep, you shall be sure to sleep in Jesus. There are many would have Christ to receive their soules at death, and that say with dying *Stephen*, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*: But if ever you would have Christ to receive your souls when you die, you must be sure to receive him into your souls whilst you live, if ever you would have him to receive you into heaven, you must receive him into your hearts. No man makes a will, but he saith, *Imprimis*, I bequeath my soule unto Jesus Christ my Redeemer

Heaven. But how doſt thou know that Jeſus Chriſt will accept of this Legacy? If thy ſoul hath not *Chriſt's* Image upon it, if it be not regenerated and renewed, Jeſus Chriſt will never own it. Thou maiſt bequeath it unto Chriſt, but the Devil will claim it, if thy ſoul hath the Devills Image upon it, if it be a ſwiniſh, polluted, unbelieving, unregenerate ſoul, thou maiſt beſtow it upon God, but the Devil will recover it out of Gods hands: pardon this expreſſion, it is not mine, but St. *Auſtins*. Beloved, if ever you would reign with Chriſt when you die, he muſt reign in you whilſt you live: and if ever you would ſleep an happy ſleep, you muſt live in Jeſus that you may ſleep in Jeſus.

Secondly, In the ſecond place, if ever you would ſleep an happy death, then you muſt take heed of overcharging your ſelves with worldly cares. A man that is full of cares cannot ſleep: therefore when men would ſleep, they lay [as the Proverb is] all their cares under the pillow, O take heed of overmuch carking.

Thirdly, If ever you would ſleep an happy ſleep when you die, you muſt take heed of ſucking too much of the pleaſures of this life; A man that eats a full ſupper, will ſleep very diſquietly, therefore they that ſleep quietly uſe to eat but light ſuppers; for when a mans ſtomack is over charged, it takes away his ſweet ſleep from him. So if ever you would ſleep an happy ſleep, when you come to die, O take heed of ſucking too much of the pleaſures of this life; take heed of eating too large a meal of worldly delights, and of creature comforts, theſe worldly pleaſures will make the ſleep of death unquiet unto you. Oh let no *Dalilah's* lap, deprive you of *Abrahams* boſom! Remember that *David* by *Bathſheba's* imbraces, loſt the imbraces of God, I mean, the ſenſe of the imbraces of God, the joy and comfort of them.

Fourthly, If ever you would ſleep an happy ſleep in death, then labour to work hard for Heaven while you live. Oh how delightfull is ſleep to a weary man? When a man hath taken pains all the day, as the Traveller that hath travelled all the day, or the Ploughman that hath been at work all the day, how quietly, how ſoundly doth he ſleep in the night? O Beloved! If ever you would ſleep an happy ſleep at death, then labour to work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling, and give all diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure. The more you labour for Heaven the better, the ſweeter will your ſleep be when you come to die. And remember this, That as much ſleeping in the day time, will hinder a mans ſleep at night; So you that idle away the time of your providing for Heaven in this your day, you that ſleep away the minute upon which eternity doth depend; Oh, you will take a ſad ſleep when death ſeizeth upon you, Take heed therefore of ſleeping whilſt you live, that ſo your ſleep in the night of death may be comfortable to you. Laſtly, If ever you would ſleep an happy ſleep when you die, then take heed of the ſleep of ſinne; Sin in Scripture is compared to a ſleep, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*, that is, thou that ſinneſt. Sin is ſuch a ſleep as brings the ſleep of death. Sin brings the firſt death, and ſinn brings the ſecond death; All miſeries whatſoever are the daughters of ſinn. If you would ſleep an happy ſleep, and have an happy awakening at the Reſurrection, then take heed of the ſleep of ſinn, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ariſe from the dead, and Jeſus Chriſt ſhall give thee life*, 5. 14. So Rom. 13. 11, 12, 13. with which I will conclude; and I pray you mark it well, for it was a Text that converted Saint *Auguſtine*, *Knowing the time*, Beloved, *that now it is high time to awake out of ſleep, for now is our ſalvation nearer then when we believed. The night is far ſpent, the day is at hand, let us therefore caſt off the works of darkneſſe, and let us put on the armor of light; Let us walk honeſtly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenneſſe, not in chambering and wantonneſſe, not in ſtrife and envying, but put you on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make*